



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
25 West 94th Street
April 19, 2016**

LANDMARK WEST! is a not-for-profit community organization committed to the preservation of the architectural heritage of the Upper West Side.

The Certificate of Appropriateness Committee wishes to comment on the application to install a barrier-free access ramp, planters, and fencing; construct a rooftop addition, elevator bulkhead, and solar array; modify a window opening; and replace windows and security grilles at 25 West 94th Street, a Renaissance Revival style rowhouse designed by Gilbert A. Schellenger and built in 1885-86, which is part of the Upper West Side/Central Park West Historic District.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee notes that there are many features of this proposal which are similar to common alteration applications seen across the district—namely, rooftop and rear yard additions. In this case, they appear more innocuous than usual.

The rear facade remains largely intact and the upper floor punched openings are respected, with one opening proposed to be enlarged for utility—an intervention in keeping with the spirit of these exposures.

The rear yard excavation is for outdoor recreation and enjoyment, a softscape which is a permeable surface and not just a roof to a subterranean personal art gallery, private bunker, or individual Equinox. Rather, it respects its neighbors and itself.

The rooftop addition is set back and equally as respectful.

The restraint, however, is also tauntingly applied to the street facade. The early tax photos are enticing with evidence of the original cornice, bas relief banding, door enframements, balconette, and grand stoop. Since the proposed scope of work does not seek to restore any of these elements, the proposed ramp seems to get the job done in a well executed, understated way befitting of the existing stripped facade. Some members of the Committee felt that the railing could provide greater elegance punctuated with light fixtures, or posts.

Ultimately, our committee welcomes increased accessibility and supports approval of this certificate of appropriateness.

Thank you for your time.